

Message Text

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SUBJECT: CERP 0008- UPDATE OF EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMS IN MAURITIUS

REF: (A) 77 PORT LOUIS A-60 (B) 77 STATE A-2507

1. THE FOLLOWING REPORT ON UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN MAURITIUS IS AN UPDATE OF REF A AND WILL DESCRIBE ONLY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS OR CHANGES IN THE UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WHICH HAVE OCCURRED SINCE NOVEMBER 1977. THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS ARE KEYED TO REF B PARAGRAPHS A, B, AND E.

2. THE UNDP RESREP, IN REVIEWING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN MAURITIUS (PARA A), AGAIN POINTED OUT THAT THE UNDP TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR MAURITIUS IS NOW AND WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE TO BE TIED TO LARGER, MAURITIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECTS EMBODIED IN THE COUNTRY'S FIVE YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1975-1980. HOWEVER, THE RESREP DID DESCRIBE ONE PROJECT WHICH HE BELIEVED
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HAD MADE AN IMPORTANT AND UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION TO MAURITIAN LIFE. THIS IS A BEEF AND MILD PRODUCING PROJECT, WHICH WAS BEGUN IN 1972 WITH A UNDP STUDY INTO THE FESIBILITY OF RESURRECTING THE CATTLE INDUSTRY IN MAURITIUS. CATTLE RAISING IN MAURITIUS HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN VERY DISAPPOINTING. THERE IS A LACK OF GRASS ON THE LOWLANDS ON WHICH CATTLE COULD FEED AND THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PROBLEMS ON

THE HIGHER GROUND, WHERE THERE IS AMPLE GRASS, WITH CATTLE-DECIMATING FLIES, WHICH HAVE RESISTED ALL ATTEMPTS AT ERADICATION. THE UNDP STUDY INTRODUCED A ZERO-GRAZING CATTLE PROGRAM WHICH ALLOWS MAURITIANS TO RAISE CATTLE IN THE LOWLANDS, WHERE THEY CAN BE KEPT FREE OF PESTS. INSTEAD OF EATING GRASS IN THE FIELDS, THE CATTLE ARE FED MOLASSES AND SUGAR CANE TOPS. ACCORDING TO THE RESREP, THE CATTLE PROGRAM IS NOW JUST BEGINNING TO REGISTER SOME SUCCESSES. ONE PRIVATE FIRM HAS NOW AMASSED A HERD OF 2,000 HEAD OF CATTLE AND A GOVERNMENT MILK PROJECT HAS BEGUN TO PRODUCE MILK ON A SMALL SCALE. MOST OF THIS SUCCESS HAS BEEN REGISTERED IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, PARTICULARLY IN THE SUGAR INDUSTRY. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SIGNS THAT THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT ALSO GET INTO CATTLE RAISING IN A BIG WAY AS WELL. THE RES REP IS JUSTLY PROUD OF THIS PROJECT BECAUSE AT ITS INCEPTION THERE WAS A WIDESPREAD BELIEF THAT CATTLE RAISING WAS SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE ON THE ISLAND. THESE INITIAL SUCCESSES HOPEFULLY HAVE TURNED AROUND THE CATTLE INDUSTRY AND MADE IT A VIABLE PURSUIT.

3. THE RESREP STATED THAT PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION (PARA B) WILL BE IMPROVED IN THE COMING MONTHS WITH THE ADDITION TO HIS STAFF OF A NEW UNDP EXPERT WHOSE SPECIALTY IS ADMINISTRATION. THE UNDP OFFICIAL, WHO ARRIVED IN MARCH, 1978, WILL ASSIST THE RESREP IN THE OVERSEEING OF THE UNDP PROGRAM IN MAURITIUS AND IN THE SEYCHELLES, WHICH IS ALSO UNCLASSIFIED

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UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE MAURITIAN UNDP OFFICE.

4. AS STATED IN REF A, THERE WILL BE FEW NEW UNDP PROGRAMS FOR 1977-1980 (PARA E). HE SAID THAT THERE WERE THREE PROJECTS, WHICH ARE NOW IN VARIOUS STAGES OF COMPLETION, WHICH PROBABLY WILL HAVE THE MOST IMPACT AND WHICH MAY BE EXPANDED IN COMING YEARS. THESE PROJECTS IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE ARE: (1) A 326,000 U.S. DOLLAR STUDY PROJECT INTO A HYDROELECTRIC POWER GENERATING PLANT WHICH, IF EVENTUALLY BUILT, WOULD BE ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST USEFUL UNDERTAKINGS YET PLANNED FOR MAURITIUS; (2) THE 750,000 U.S. DOLLAR BEEF AND MILK PROJECT MENTIONED IN PARA 2 ABOVE, WHICH PROVIDES FOR AN EXPERT AND EQUIPMENT AND WHICH NOW SHOWS SIGNS OF EXPANDING INTO OTHER FORMS OF ANIMAL BREEDING; AND (3) THE 500,000 U.S. DOLLAR GRANT TO BUY EQUIPMENT AND TO PROVIDE AN EXPERT TO THE MAURITIAN NATIONAL STANDARDS BUREAU. OTHER IMPORTANT PROJECTS WERE THE PURCHASE OF A RADAR FOR THE METEOROLOGICAL STATION, FELLOWSHIPS TO THE MAURITIAN INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, AND THE ASSIGNMENT OF A PROCUREMENT SPECIALIST TO THE MAURITIAN GOVERNMENT WHO WILL OVERSEE PURCHASES BY THE GOVERNMENT.

5. THE RESREP REITERATED SOME OF THE PROBLEMS AND PROJECT CUTS THAT RESULTED FROM THE UNDP'S FINANCIAL CRISIS OF 1975-1976 (PARA E) AND ADDED THAT MAURITIAN CONFIDENCE IN THE UNDP'S ABILITY TO CARRY THROUGH ON PROGRAMS HAS BEEN SEVERELY SHAKEN. AFTER THE CUTS, WHICH REDUCED THE BUDGET FROM 8 MILLION U.S. DOLLARS TO 5 MILLION U.S. DOLLARS, MAURITIAN OFFICIALS BECAME AND REMAIN JUSTLY HESITANT TO ENTER PROJECTS WITH THE UNDP WHICH INVOLVE LARGE OUTLAYS OF MONEY AND MATERIALS FOR FEAR THAT THE UNDP WILL ABANDON THEM IN MID-STREAM.

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